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Committee for Programme and Coordination
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Agenda item 8
Adoption of the report of the Committee on its forty-sixth session

Draft report

Rapporteur: Mr. Valery **Zhdanovich** (Belarus)

Addendum

Proposed strategic framework for the period 2008-2009

(Item 3 (b))

Programme 1
General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management

1. At its 10th meeting, on 22 August 2006, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 1, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, of the proposed biennial programme plan for the period 2008-2009 (A/61/6 (Prog. 1)).

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the programme and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. General support was expressed for the proposed programme, and the importance of the services provided to Member States by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management in New York and the other conference-servicing duty stations, namely Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi, was recognized. The reform measures undertaken by the Department to improve its performance and the incorporation into the programme of the views put forward in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1) were noted and commended. Concerns were expressed about how the Department would ensure equal treatment of all the six official languages of the United Nations, as called for

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in General Assembly resolution 60/236 B. The view was expressed that conference services in Nairobi were still in need of improvement, and questions were raised as to whether sufficient progress had been made on long-standing issues of recruitment of interpreters and strengthening of the information technology unit in the conference services area.

4. It was emphasized that it was important for the Department to improve its coordination and communication in the area of conference services and to avoid overlap and duplication between Headquarters and the conference-servicing duty stations of Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi. The subject of outsourcing of conference services, such as the use of freelancers and contractual services, was raised and the question of whether different approaches were taken at other conference-servicing duty stations arose. Concern was expressed about the impact outsourcing would have on the staff of the Department.

5. Views were expressed in support of the proposed strategic framework. However, while general support was expressed for the overall orientation of the programme, concern was raised that the logical framework of the programme plan was excessively standardized and, for that reason, did not provide sufficiently for the specific conference-servicing needs programmed for each duty station. Concern was also expressed that the quality of documentation and conference services had not been sufficiently emphasized in the logical framework, nor had the requirement to improve the timely issuance of parliamentary documentation. Regarding indicators of achievement of the programme, support was expressed for the use of client surveys. However, the view was also expressed that the programme lacked a clear strategy to provide an alternative effective mechanism for Member States to evaluate the performance of the Department, as called for in section II, part B, paragraph 4, of General Assembly resolution 60/236 B. The view was expressed that the content of the current survey questionnaire needed to be improved and expanded, and that surveys should be conducted on a regular basis. The question of how to increase the provision of conference services to regional and other major groupings of Member States was also raised.

Conclusions and recommendations

6. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the narrative of programme 1, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, of the proposed biennial programme plan, subject to the following modifications:**

Overall orientation

Paragraph 1.3

In the second sentence, replace the words "the timely issuance of documentation" with the words "to provide high-quality documents in a timely manner in all official languages, as well as high-quality conference services to Member States at all duty stations, and to achieve those aims as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible".

Paragraph 1.4

Replace the last sentence with the following: "Effective measures to be taken by the Department to seek the evaluation by Member States of the quality of the conference services provided to them, as a key performance indicator of the Department, will provide equal opportunities to Member States to present their evaluations in the six official languages of the United Nations and will be in full compliance with relevant resolutions of the General Assembly".

A. Conference management, New York

Subprogramme 1
General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs

Indicators of achievement

Replace indicator (a) with the following: "(a) Reduced number of complaints by representatives of Member States to intergovernmental organs and members of expert bodies referring to the conduct of meetings as well as the level and quality of technical secretariat services".

Paragraph 1.5

In subparagraph (a), delete the words "strengthening and revitalizing".

Subprogramme 2
Planning, development and coordination of conference services

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

In expected accomplishment (a), replace the words "Overall improvement in the" with the word "Improved".

Replace expected accomplishment (e) with the following: "(e) Increased provision of conference services that are requested by regional and other major groupings of Member States".

Indicators of achievement

Replace indicator (a) with the following: "(a) Reduced number of complaints by representatives of Member States to intergovernmental organs and members of expert bodies as to the quality of conference services".

Delete indicator (d) (iii).

At the beginning of indicators (e) (i) and (ii), insert the word "Increased".

Strategy

Paragraph 1.6

In subparagraph (g), after the words "conference services", delete the remainder of the text and insert the words: ", in accordance with legislative mandates, in order to plan, process, monitor and manage documentation and meeting services more effectively, while keeping the

General Assembly aware of new technologies that can be used in the Organization to achieve timeliness and better quality of services provided".

Subprogramme 3
Documentation services

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

Replace expected accomplishment (b) with the following: "(b) Quality and cost-effectiveness of editing and translation services".

Indicators of achievement

Replace indicator (a) with the following: "(a) Reduced number of complaints by representatives of Member States to intergovernmental organs, members of expert bodies and client departments as to the quality of translation and editorial services".

Strategy

Paragraph 1.7

In the second sentence, after the words "achieving greater", insert the words "quality and".

In subparagraph (d), after the words "capable of supporting", delete the word "full".

Subprogramme 4
Meetings and publishing services

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

At the beginning of expected accomplishment (b), insert the words "Quality and".

Indicators of achievement

Replace indicator (a) with the following: "(a) Reduced number of complaints by representatives of Member States to intergovernmental organs, members of expert bodies and client departments as to the quality of interpretation, verbatim reporting and publishing services".

Strategy

Paragraph 1.8

At the end of subparagraph (b), add the words "to achieve better quality and timeliness".

B. C. and D. Conference management, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi

Subprogramme 2
Planning, development and coordination of conference services

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

In expected accomplishment (a), replace the words "Overall improvement in the" with the word "Improved".

Replace expected accomplishment (e) with the following: "(e) Increased provision of conference services that are requested by regional and other major groupings of Member States".

Indicators of achievement

Replace indicator (a) with the following: "(a) Reduced number of complaints by representatives of Member States to intergovernmental organs and members of expert bodies as to the quality of conference services".

Delete indicator (d) (iii).

At the beginning of indicators (e) (i) and (ii), insert the word "Increased".

Strategy

Paragraph 1.9

In subparagraph (f), after the words "conference services", delete the remainder of the text and insert the words ", in accordance with legislative mandates, in order to plan, process, monitor and manage documentation and meeting services more effectively, while keeping the General Assembly aware of new technologies that can be used in the Organization to achieve timeliness and better quality of services provided".

Subprogramme 3
Documentation services

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

Replace expected accomplishment (b) with the following: "(b) Quality and cost-effectiveness of editing and translation services".

Indicators of achievement

Replace indicator (a) with the following: "(a) Reduced number of complaints by representatives of Member States to intergovernmental organs, members of expert bodies and client departments as to the quality of translation and editorial services".

Strategy

Paragraphs 1.10, 1.13 and 1.16

In the second sentence, after the words "achieving greater", insert the words "quality and".

In subparagraph (d) after the words "capable of supporting", delete the word "full".

Subprogramme 4
Meetings and publishing services

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

At the beginning of expected accomplishment (b), insert the words "Quality and".

Indicators of achievement

Replace indicator (a) with the following: "(a) Reduced number of complaints by representatives of Member States to intergovernmental organs, members of expert bodies and client departments as to the quality of interpretation, verbatim reporting and publishing services".

Strategy

Paragraphs 1.11, 1.14 and 1.17

At the end of subparagraph (b), insert the words "to achieve better quality and timeliness".